



ADVICE SHEET 1

MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

WHY IS MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT IMPORTANT?

...because responsibility for safety starts at the top.

Everyone agrees that a safe workplace is important, but it won't happen if you don't do all you can to make your workplace as safe as it can be. The primary responsibility for a safe workplace rests with you, the employer.

Demonstrate your commitment to safety and ensure that everyone in your business is clear about their health and safety responsibilities.

Your workers are among your greatest assets at your workplace. It makes good business sense to establish an effective safety management plan that protects your valuable assets.

Management commitment

Ways you can develop a successful safety culture and demonstrate your commitment include:

- implementing safe systems of work
- encouraging the reporting of incidents and opportunities for improvement
- valuing your staff contributions and involving them in decisions
- providing safe and effective tools and support (e.g. time and resources to perform the safety role/function) to achieve the desired work outcome.

These elements send the message that you are serious about safety. From this commitment effective partnerships are formed with your workers to achieve a safer workplace. One of the easiest ways to start to show this management commitment to safety is to develop, and implement, a health and safety policy (see the example at the end of this sheet).

All persons involved in work activities at your workplace need to be considered when developing safety processes, including labour hire workers, apprentices/trainees not directly employed by you, contractors and others. With increased outsourcing and contract work, it is imperative that these people understand their responsibilities as far as safety is concerned at your workplace.

<p>WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE RED ZONE...</p>	<p>...it is unlikely that safety responsibilities in your business have been made clear or that safety is seen as a priority.</p> <p>Ticks in the RED zone indicate that you need to take immediate action to develop a safety culture by clarifying people's roles in managing safety, defining your role, allocating resources to meet your safety responsibilities, and demonstrating your personal commitment to operating a safe business.</p>
<p>Determine safety responsibilities and clearly communicate them.</p>	<p>Outline safety responsibilities in your workers' position descriptions and be clear about what each person's safety responsibilities are.</p> <p>Speak with your workers about what is expected of them regarding safety in the workplace—and about what you need to do to help them achieve these expectations.</p> <p>If you expect them to report incidents, they need a safety reporting procedure—and they expect you to act upon the safety reports. Similarly, if you expect them to work safely, they need safe work procedures—and they should expect you to involve them in the development of those procedures.</p> <p>Similarly, you should also involve “non-workers” (contractors, labour hire workers, apprentices etc) in the safety responsibilities discussion process, making your expectations of them explicitly clear.</p>
<p>Commit, time and money</p>	<p>Time and money spent on safety is an investment in good business practice—it often means reduced costs for workers' compensation, less time lost due to injuries, and better productivity. In hard economic times cutting time and investment in safety is often seen as an easy solution, however this will almost invariably lead to someone getting hurt, and your costs skyrocketing.</p> <p>When responsibilities have been identified, commit adequate time and money to ensure these responsibilities are met.</p> <p>Spend time to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop safe work procedures • train and supervise your workers • act on safety reports (or at least provide feedback to staff as to what is happening with the issue). <p>Spend money to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fix safety problems. • maintain and repair equipment • provide personal protective equipment such as safety glasses, ear muffs etc.
<p>Make safety a priority</p>	<p>When you have identified safety responsibilities and have committed resources to make your business safe, take the initiative to make safety a top priority.</p> <p>Good communication between your workers, supervisors and you ensures that your workplace systems will be effective. Discuss safety issues at your regular workplace meetings, implement an incident reporting procedure for accidents, incidents and near misses, and follow-up workers' safety issues as a priority.</p> <p>Elements that comprise your safety management approach should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing and implementing safe work procedures for all tasks that expose your workers to risk • ensuring safe work procedures are followed at all times • involving your workers in decisions about their health and safety • training your workers to do their jobs safely • ensuring safety problems are reported quickly—and acted upon • reviewing procedures when there are changes in the workplace or after an incident • providing resources to address your safety responsibilities • ensuring your workers' compensation insurance policy is accurate and up-to-date • ensuring that any required workplace rehabilitation policies and procedures are prominently displayed in the workplace (small workplaces do not require these formal structures—see Advice Sheet 6 for more information).

TYPICAL WORKPLACE RESPONSIBILITIES

Owner/manager responsibilities	Worker responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult your workers in all safety related activity.• Identify issues in your workplace and control all risks.• Develop, implement and follow safe work procedures.• Train your workers in safe work procedures.• Ensure safe equipment is purchased and maintained.• Develop an incident and injury reporting procedure (for accidents, incidents and near misses) and act upon any reports.• Supply safety gear (e.g. safety glasses, ear muffs, respirators etc).• Have a workers' compensation insurance policy and a return to work program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow procedures.• Participate in developing safe work procedures when asked by your employer.• Participate in training.• Report incidents and injuries.• Use equipment safely and properly.• Use safety gear.• Participate in your return to work plan.

SAMPLE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The (insert company's name) Company is committed to ensuring a safe and healthy workplace for its workers, and others who are affected by our workplace activities, by eliminating or minimising the risk of injury to people and the risk of damage to plant and equipment.

We will achieve this by following relevant legislation and adopting a strategy of:

- identifying hazards in the workplace
- assessing risks to workers and others
- deciding on control measures
- implementing those controls
- monitoring that the controls are effective.

The (insert company's name) Company is committed to providing:

- a safe work environment
- safe systems of work for our workers
- suitable and safe equipment
- information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure workers are competent and working safely.

We will also ensure that:

- equipment is maintained
- chemicals are used safely
- managers and supervisors take reasonable precautions and exercise proper diligence to comply with safety obligations.

The Company promotes the participation of workers in the safety program. Workers have obligations under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* and are expected to follow the Company's safety directions to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace.

Signature: _____ Designation/position: _____

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

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